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THE "MONTEZUMA" OF THE PUEBLO INDIANS.

BY ADOLF F. BANDELIER.

There is no need of proving that the name of the Mexican "Chief of Men" (Tlaāca-tecuhtli) who perished while in the custody of the Spaniards under Hernando Cortés in 1520 was Mo-tecu-h-zoma, literally "Our Wrathful Chieftain." Bernal Diez del Castillo, an eye-witness and the much-prejudiced author of the "True History" of the Conquest, is responsible for the corruption into Montezuma, which has since become popular and most widely known. It is interesting how that misspelling has taken hold of the public mind, how it has completely supplanted the original true orthography and meaning. Meaning even is out of place here, for, while *Motecuhzoma* is a legitimate Nahuatl word with a very plain signification, and also a typical Indian personal name, *Montezuma* has no signification whatever; and yet, in Mexico, even the Nahuatl Indians—those who speak the Nahuatl language daily—know only Montezuma and would hardly recognize the original name as applicable to him, whom they have been taught to call an "emperor."

Still, it is not so very strange when we consider that at Cozcatlan, in the State of Puebla, at least two hundred miles from the City of Mexico, the Indians gravely tell the traveler that the ruins of an ancient Indian town in that vicinity are those of the "Palace of Montezuma," where that "emperor" was "born" and whence he started out to "conquer the city of Mexico." It cannot surprise us to hear of perversions of names only. The folk-tale of the Indians of Cozcatlan (a modern tale, of course) shows how easily facts are distorted in the minds of primitive people when they do not originally belong to the circle of their own historical tradition.

In the story of Cozcatlan we have a conquest of Mexico by Montezuma from the *southeast*. In New Mexico the present century has evolved the story of the conquest of Mexico by Montezuma from the *north*. It is necessary, however, before we examine that story and its origin to investigate how the name of Montezuma crept as far north as the southwest of the United States, through what vehicles, and how far it extended its fame.

No mention is made of Montezuma in Spanish documents on the Southwest of an earlier date than 1664, when, speaking of the (then recently discovered) ruins of Casas Grandes, in northwestern Chihuahua, Francisco de Gorraez Beaumont and Antonio de Oca Sarmiento speak of those buildings as the old "houses of Montezuma." Such an utterance, coming from Spanish officers of high rank, shows that already then the name Montezuma had become, in the minds of the Spaniards themselves, confounded with migration-tales of Indian tribes of a very ancient date, and that those tales apply, not to the unfortunate war-chief of the time of Cortés, but to one of his predecessors in office, Motecuhzoma Ilhuicamina, who commanded the forces of the Mexicans in the early part of the fifteenth century, according to the still doubtful chronology of the ancient Mexicans. The confusion between those two personages had already been procreative of a mythical Montezuma in the minds of the educated people. Is it to be wondered at if that mythical figure took a still stronger hold on the conceptions of the simple Indian?

Genuine folk-tales of the Chihuahua Indians are reported at an early date by Captain Gaspar Perez de Villagran, one of the officers of Juan de Oñate, when the latter colonized New Mexico in 1598. The metrical chronicle of Villagran was printed in 1610, and it mentions the tradition of a migration of tribes from the north, during which migration they divided into two bands. But no mention is made of the name of Montezuma as connected with Indian folklore of northern Mexico; nor do the Jesuit Fathers, who studied the Indians of all the States north of Jalisco as early as the latter part of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, and who consequently enjoyed the advantage of holding intercourse with those natives while the latter were still in their primitive condition, make any mention of a Montezuma lore. Ribas, whose classical work on Sonora and Sinaloa appeared in 1645, is absolutely silent on that subject, although he makes frequent and detailed mention of the creeds, beliefs, rites, and traditions of nearly all the tribes that inhabited those two states of the present Mexican republic. In none of the reports on the New Mexican Pueblos, as far as we have them previous to 1680, does the name of Montezuma appear in connection with those aborigines. Hence it may safely be assumed that the Montezuma story is, in the North American southwest, as much of an importation from the south and subsequent

transformation, as it is clearly an importation and transformation, though imported thither from the northwest at the village of Cozcatlan.

Every Spanish expedition that penetrated to the northward had in its company Indian followers as servants and sometimes as interpreters, since dialects of the Nahuatl tongue prevailed as far north along the Pacific coast as Sinaloa. Among natives from the interior of Mexico the name Montezuma was, of course, a household word already in the second generation, for the fame of the war chief and of his tragical end increased in proportion to distance from the time as well as from the scene of his career. In that second generation Motecuhzoma was already practically forgotten, and Montezuma remained in the mouths of the people as a hero. An Indian hero very soon becomes a mythical personage, and what with confuse reports of old traditions and folk-tales current among nearly every tribe, Montezuma could not fail to become a figure which, in course of time, shone among the folk-lore of nearly every tribe. It may be asserted that the New Mexican Montezuma is probably the latest of these numerous local adaptations and infiltrations into the mythical history of the Mexican and Southwestern aborigines.

At an early date confuse notions of the geography even of central Mexico took root among the inhabitants of the New Mexican pueblos. When Coronado evacuated New Mexico in 1542, some Indians from the valley of Mexico remained behind at one of the villages of Zuñi. Forty-two years later Antonio de Espejo visited the Zuñis and found three of these Indians still alive. He also heard of a great lake on the shores of which were important settlements of sedentary Indians, all of which were rich in gold and precious stones. That lake was said to be at least several moons distant from Zuñi. It is easy to recognize in those wild statements a distorted picture of the home of the Mexican Indians. Combining it with the name and fame of Montezuma, we obtain a basis upon which a well conceived Indian folk-story might be established.

The Montezuma story circulated slowly among the New Mexican tribes. During the interrogatories of Indian prisoners taken before Governor Don Antonio de Otermin in the autumn of 1681, when the latter made his unsuccessful expedition into New Mexico as far north as Cochiti, quite detailed information was elicited as to the original causes of the great Insurrection of the Pueblos. The witnesses examined were Indians who had not been in almost daily

contact with the Spaniards and their Mexican Indian servants, and not one of them spoke of Montezuma, whereas the names of specific Pueblo deities, such as Caudi, Heume, and Tilim, were mentioned as those of gods appearing to Popé in the estufa of Taos. Only the Indians from the pueblos around Santa Fé spoke of Montezuma, connecting his name with that of Pose-yemo (Pedro Lezemu in the defective copy of the journal of the siege of Santa Fé of 1680, which copy was made in the last century by order of the Spanish crown), a historical personage of Tehua folk-lore, also called Pose-ueve, and known to the Keresan or Queres tribes of New Mexico under the name of Push-ay-a, to the Zúñis as Pó-shai-an-k'ya, and to the Jemez as Pest-ia-sod-e. The prisoners on the 20th of August, 1680, treated of Pose-yemo and Montezuma as of two distinct personages though related. In this century they have gradually become confounded.

Hardly anything is heard of Montezuma in New Mexico during the last century; in fact, until the time of the Mexican war of 1846. Farther south, however, it became customary to attribute the origin of every notable ruin, about the past of which nothing was known, to Montezuma and to the hosts which he was said to have led to the south. Casa Grande, on the Gila river, escaped from this fate. Already Father Kuehne (Kino) heard from the Pimas that the erection of that building and of the cluster of houses surrounding it was due to a chief named Siva, who came from the north, and although Father Sedelmair in 1746 incidentally refers to the Montezuma story in connection with Casa Grande, there is a decided inclination toward attributing the construction of those edifices to some fraction of the Moki tribe rather than to the Nahuatl of Mexico. It may be noticed here without impropriety and without any danger of misinterpretation that it is a singular coincidence to find early explorers mentioning the Moki as the possible founders of settlements so similar in architectural type to Casas Grandes in Chihuahua as the Casa Grande is, when subsequent investigation tends to prove that the Moki belong to the same linguistic stock as the Nahuatl, the Pima, and the Opata of Sonora. I mention this merely as a coincidence, not as a historical indication.

At the present day, when one inquires of the Indians at El Paso del Norte about "ruinas," they fail to understand him and reply that there are none; but if he asks concerning "Montezumas," they will at once point to the spots where mounds covered with pottery denote the former existence of permanent aboriginal build-

ings. The same is the case along the course of the Casas Grandes river from the Hacienda of San Diego to Ascension. Every mound, every ancient wall, is not a "ruin" but a "Montezuma" in the mouths of the people. The tribes who inhabited that section at the time it was first discovered, the Sumas, also roamed about El Paso, and were even located thereabout by the Spaniards during the last century. It is, therefore, likely that through them the original Spanish mistake of attributing the erection of Casas Grandes to a mythical Montezuma (in the absence of any other aboriginal tradition or folk-lore touching their origin) became circulated, and that thus the personal name was transformed into a designation for a certain class of ancient vestiges.

We now come to the time when the Montezuma story assumed a prominent position among the New Mexican Pueblos. The manner in which this happened is not devoid of interest.

In the year 1846, when war between the United States and Mexico was imminent, a singular document was concocted (according to its tenor, at least) in the City of Mexico. It is written in Spanish and was, to my knowledge, never printed, but exists in several manuscript copies in New Mexico. It purports to be a "History of Montezuma." Beginning with the folk-tale current among the Tehuas about their hero god Pose-yemo or Pose-ueve, it applies that part of the story relating to the latter's childhood to the childhood of Montezuma, and then goes on to relate the career of the latter, of his sister and mother, etc., until it makes of him a conqueror of Mexico. There Montezuma becomes connected with the Malinche. What the Malinche was is well known. The name itself is a corruption of the Spanish name Marina by the Nahuatl, who, not having the letter "r" in their alphabet, substituted always the letter "l," thus making "Malina" out of "Marina." Marina was the interpreter *en chef* of Cortés during his conquest of Mexico. The document cited makes of the Malinche a daughter of Montezuma, and, after bringing in Cortés and his conquest and victory over Montezuma, concludes by marrying the Malinche to Cortés, and by representing New Mexico as a part of the dower which the Indian maiden brought to her Spanish husband. Such a document, manufactured at a time when an American invasion of New Mexico was apprehended, written at the City of Mexico and circulated in every New Mexican pueblo that could be reached, is plainly what may be called a "campaign document," conceived in view of strengthening

the claims of Mexico upon New Mexico in the eyes of the Pueblo Indians and refuting anything to the contrary that might be anticipated from the side of the United States. It is written in a style peculiarly within the grasp of the Indian, it being Spanish after the fashion in which the Pueblo Indian uses that language in conversation. Whether written in New Mexico and only dated from the capital, or written at that capital, it is certain that the author deserves great credit for the shrewdness with which he has adapted both story and style to the imagination and power of understanding of the aborigines. Since the circulation of that document the story of Montezuma has become stereotyped in the mouths of many Pueblo Indians, and when interrogated by tourists and ethnological volunteers they repeat it with greater or less precision.

On the surface it would appear that the "History of Montezuma" just spoken of cannot have been written anywhere else than at the City of Mexico, since it seems to have been plainly a political instrument in view of an impending invasion. Still, it is not impossible that it was a product of New Mexican ingenuity. There was material for it in one of the pueblos of that territory, that of Jemez.

For many years past it has been known that the Indians of Jemez had in their possession a printed book, which they carefully concealed and of which it was stated that it contained a "History of the Pueblos," profusely illustrated. I never succeeded in seeing it, but the Most Reverend Archbishop of Santa Fé, during one of his official visits to Jemez, obtained permission to peruse the mysterious volume. It proved to be, as we ascertained by comparing it with a copy in my possession, a copy of the Letters (*Cartas*) of Cortés edited by Lorenzana and illustrated with pictures of Mexican costumes, etc. From this book, the existence of which was known to all the Pueblos and about the contents of which they had been partially informed, it would have been easy to gather material for the "History of Montezuma" of 1846, and it is not unlikely that it has been the source of the latter, except of the introductory portions, which embody a genuine tradition of the Tehua Indians, which was easy to obtain from any one of the more communicative members of that or of any neighboring tribe.

The Montezuma of New Mexico is, therefore, in its present form a modern creation. The Indian—that is, the Indian of higher standing in his tribe, the wizard, for example—discriminates between the modern imaginary figure and the historic gods of his own,

and, while he may repeat the Montezuma tale to an unsophisticated listener, fresh from the outside world, with the greatest apparent sincerity, he inwardly thanks that modern story for the service it renders him in screening his own sacred traditions from pryers into secrets which the Indian considers as his own and no one's else. Younger people may repeat the Montezuma tale in all candor, simply because they do not yet know better; but, as it is, it stands as an importation first, a modern fabrication or compilation next, without the slightest connection whatever with original mythology and traditional history of the North American southwest and northern Mexico.

Among the many vehicles that contributed to popularize the name of Montezuma in these regions the dance of the "Matachines" should be mentioned. It was introduced among the Indians of central Mexico in the sixteenth century as a part of the semi-religious theatrical performances, by means of which the Franciscans gradually superseded the idolatrous dances of Indian paganism. In it appear two prominent characters—the "Monarch" (*el Monarca*) and, as solo-dancer, the Malinche. With the idea of the Monarch the recollection of Montezuma became intimately connected. When the Matachines were introduced into New Mexico I am unable to tell, but certainly, at latest, during the 18th century. The relations, which in that dance are indicated as between the Malinche and the Monarch, bear a striking analogy to those represented in the "History of Montezuma" above mentioned.

It is also to be noticed that several villages—above all, that of Pecos—have been represented in this century as the birthplace of Montezuma. This seems to give color to the assumption that Montezuma was indeed a real character of New Mexican aboriginal tradition. If we compare, however, the genuine tradition of Pose-yemo among the Tehuas with the Montezuma tale, we see at a glance that the latter is only an adaptation, spun out to much greater length and carrying the career of Pose-yemo into lands with which no New Mexican Indians had the least intercourse previous to the coming of the Spaniards. According to the folk-tale of Pose-yemo, the latter was a great wizard, born at the now ruined village of Pose-uing-ge, above the hot spring of the Hon. Antonio Joseph, in northern New Mexico. He performed the usual wonderful tricks attributed to a powerful Indian shaman, and, after rendering his people very prosperous and powerful, disappeared at his

native place "in the course of human events." In regard to the statement that Montezuma was born at Pecos, it must be remembered that the Pecos were a branch of the Jemez, and the existence of the book spoken of at the latter village, coupled with the intimate relations between the two tribes, contributed to create and foster the notion that Montezuma had been a wonder-child of the Pecos pueblo.

[The above article was written by Professor Bandelier while on board the steamship *San Juan*, off the coast of Tehuantepec, en route to Bolivia, his new field of investigation.—EDITOR.]

SOCIAL STATUS OF PUEBLO WOMEN.—The social corner-stone (of the Pueblos) is not the family, but the clan. Husband and wife must belong to different gentes, and the children follow the clan of the mother. The Pueblo has never used his wife as a pack-beast. He is not hen-pecked, but just, and even finds no shame in "toting" the baby upon his back all day when he has no more essential duty. The spheres of the sexes are clearly defined, but manfully. The woman is complete owner of the house and all it contains save his personal trinkets; and she has no other work to do than housework, at which she is no sloven. Should her husband ill-treat her, she could permanently evict him from home, and could be upheld in so doing. The man tills the fields, and they are his; but after the crops are housed she has an equal voice in their disposition. The live stock is, of course, his; but he will seldom sell an animal without consulting his wife. The family relations are very beautiful. Conjugal fidelity is as general as with us. The Pueblo was a prehistoric monogam, and punished unfaithfulness with death; and it is doubtful if any American community can show a less percentage of loose women.—(C. F. LUMMIS in September *Scribner*.)

"DER YUMA-SPRACHSTAMM nach den neuesten handschriftlichen Quellen dargestellt," by Albert S. Gatschet, has been issued as a *Separat-abdruck* of the "Zeitschrift für Ethnologie." In addition to considerable information of an ethnographic and descriptive nature regarding the various Yuman tribes, this pamphlet of 18 pages contains comparative vocabularies of the Havasupai, Maricopa, and Mohave dialects, and is the fourth of the author's Yuma series.